

TOO SICK TO STAND TRIAL.**INSANE FOR FIFTEEN YEARS. SUICIDE WITHOUT CAUSE.**

Feeble Physical and Mental Condition of Stephen Pettus's Slayer.

Death or Dementia May Prevent Her Ever Appearing in Court.

When Mrs. Hanna B. Southworth, the murderer of Major Stephen Pettus, was committed to the Tombs more than a month ago, it was announced that she was to have a speedy trial, and that the final proceedings in her case would certainly be had before the middle of December at the very latest.

It was claimed by her friends that she was to be pitied rather than condemned for her terrible crime, and that a public trial would result inevitably in her triumphant vindication.

Mrs. Southworth is still languishing in the Tombs, and at the present moment her fate is uncertain. A speedy trial is, if anything, less favorable than it was the day when she was committed.

The reason is that the murderer of Stephen Pettus is a very sick woman. Instead of improving in health and gaining strength from her confinement, the reverse of her prison life has been gradually sinking in mind and body, until now even her counsel despaired of her ever being able to be brought to the trial which they claim will give her the opportunity of a full vindication.

She is also in a privileged position, consistent with rules laid down for prisoners in the Tombs. Her meals are furnished every day by a caterer, and her mother, who never fails to visit her every day in the week, always brings with her some delicacies for her.

She is thus always supplied with fruits and jellies, and every effort has been made to build up her health without avail. She is under the daily care of the physicians of the Tombs, who have never once failed to attend her, and the Tombs invalid, after the first two or three days of her imprisonment, when they were able to bring her out of the frenzied hysterical condition in which she was found on the day of the murder, they have not succeeded in effecting any improvement in her condition.

On the contrary, she is now regarded as in a very critical condition, her nervous system completely shattered, and mentally she is so weakened that those who have seen her during the past two months believe that she is hopelessly demented.

This is the reason why no steps have been taken to fix a day for her trial, and why her counsel are in no hurry to do so even now.

"I do not believe that she will ever be able to stand her trial," said a member of the law firm retained to defend Mrs. Southworth to an EVENING WORLD reporter to-day. "She seems to have caved in completely, and if medical opinion is to be believed there is no prospect of her ever regaining her faculties.

"She has for a long time been struggling against a weak constitution, and why her counsel are in no hurry to do so even now.

"She is continually subject to hysterical attacks, which are growing more frequent all the time, and she cannot recognize even her most intimate friends and relatives. There is no prospect that anything will be done at present in the way of moving for a trial unless there occurs some unexpected change for the better."

Warden Osborne shock his head sadly when asked about Mrs. Southworth this morning by the reporter.

"She is one of the best prisoners I ever had," he said, "for she never complains or makes any fuss; but I am afraid she is very ill, and the doctors have to watch her all the time."

"She seems to be getting weaker all the time, and sometimes she does not come out of her cell for several days."

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